

Faith communities are signs of hope

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

It's bitter cold this Monday. The wind is strong; there is snow in the air and ice on the roads. It's not the very best day to go out, but life seems to be going on pretty much as normal in the region.

I have spent most of the day in the office, dividing my time between appointments and the ordinary paperwork and correspondence of the day.

Down the corridor, a volunteer committee of our priests is working on an important long-range program we're developing. Across the hall from them another group is working on professional development for pastoral ministers.

In about an hour our Diocesan Stewardship Council will gather for its quarterly meeting. This able and generous group of leaders will have a substantial agenda today as they offer their talent and experience to help the church develop and use wisely the resources we need to advance our common mission.

I look forward to the entire meeting, but I am especially glad that today's agenda includes an opportunity for a substantial discussion between the council and Tim Dwyer, our new superintendent of schools.

Tim will begin the conversation with a presentation about the current state of our schools and the leadership initiatives he is taking. I have no doubt that the council will



LONG THE WAY

enrich the conversation with constructive questions and suggestions. It will be a rewarding exchange. I'm so happy that it happens during Catholic Schools Week.

Yesterday I had a most enjoyable opportunity to visit Holy Apostles Parish on Lyell Avenue in Rochester. I presided and preached at the 8:30 a.m. Mass and also at the 11 a.m. Mass during which I confirmed 14 young women and men.

The weather was severe yesterday, too, but the people of Holy Apostles brought great warmth to their parish celebrations. And it seemed to me that they conveyed a special sense of support and affection for those who were confirmed.

As so many know, that section of

Rochester has been experiencing something of the winter of violence that has touched so many areas of our nation. Among the reasons I'm grateful to the people of Holy Apostles is the reminder they were to me yesterday that there is much that is good and strong and hopeful in areas that experience special challenges at a given time.

Such communities of faith are signs of hope and special sources of stability for others. As such, they merit our gratitude and all of the encouragement we can give them.

As I write these words, I think of the scriptural theme of our diocesan Statement of Mission and Goals which is guiding us through the completion of our Synod.

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; the Lord has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19).

To be sure, the brokenhearted and captives, the afflicted and prisoners are in all of our communities. They can be any of us and all of us. We can't make all problems go away. But we are not where I believe the Lord wants us to be if we fail in our efforts to identify and stand with those among us who are most in need.

Peace to all.

The Catholic Shop 78 YRS. OF SERVICE
"CATECHISM of the CATHOLIC CHURCH"
 PRESENTING THE OFFICIAL TEACHINGS ALL CATHOLICS
 THROUGHOUT THE WORLD BELIEVE IN.
 705-707 North State Street Syracuse, NY 13203-1792
 Order now for March delivery: \$19.95 1-800-422-8197
 PHONE ORDERS...MASTERCARD...VISA...AMERICAN EXPRESS...DISCOVER

BARTOLOMEO
 FUNERAL HOME, INC.

 Peter W. Giullari, Jr. Philip P. Perotto Michael P. Perotto
 Personalized service in the community since 1922.
 1425 Lexington Avenue Rochester, NY 14606
 conveniently located near 390
(716) 254-5400

Put A Little Something
 Extra With Your
 Hallmark Valentine...

 A Gift From:
COLONY CARD & GIFT SHOPPE
 840 Merchants Rd.
654-9860

The Original
 Claddagh Locket
 from Ireland

 Keep loved ones close at heart in this beautiful locket incorporating the renowned CLADDAGH SYMBOL
Irish Import Shop
 3821 West Ridge Road
 Corner of Elmgrove Road
225-1050
 open 7 days a week

THE LAMP LIGHTER
 A Special Place for Special People
February Special
Portofino
 Lobster
 served
 bed of
 complimentary
 our Caesar salad
\$14.95
 Serving Lunch Mon.-Fri.
 Dinner Mon.-Sat.
 Valentines Day (Sun) 4pm-9pm
 Located Down the Road from the Greece Marriott
831 Fetzner Rd.
 corner Maiden Lane
225-2500

Kids' Chronicle
needs a new editor!
 If you're a talented freelance writer with a strong background in Catholic religious education, this could be a great opportunity for you! The *Catholic Courier* is looking for someone to assume the "Kids' Chronicle" reins from Cindy Bassett, who is stepping down because of other obligations.
 Applicants should be creative and willing to work as part of a team; have strong writing skills, including the ability to translate Bible stories into the language of children ages 6 to 12; and able to devote 30 to 40 hours per month to Kids' Chronicle — mostly in their own homes. (The new page editor will need to spend a few hours each month at the *Courier* office.)
 If you think you're the person we're looking for, send a resume and writing samples (no co-authored work, please) to: Karen Franz, *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

Di Maria Travel
 1521 MONROE AVE. 271-0100
CANADIAN ROCKIES
 July 10th - August 9th
 275-2661